

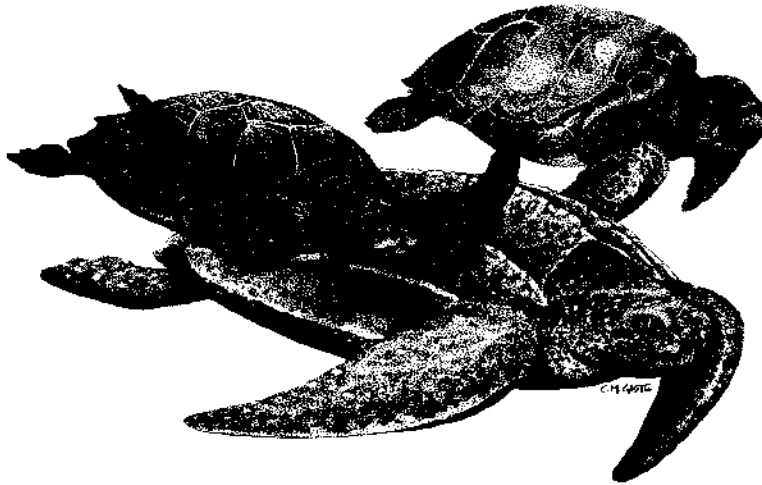
# **\*\*ATTENTION\*\***

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# Washington Amphibians & Reptiles

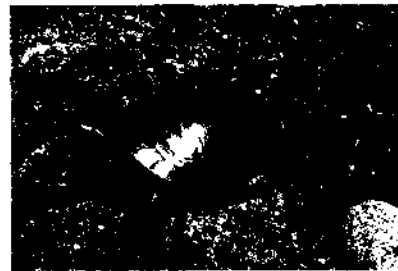
## Check List and Habitat Guide



Green turtle, *Chelonia mydas*. Bony shell, brown/black above.

Leatherback, *Dermochelys coriacea*. Leathery shell, prominent longitudinal ridges.

Loggerhead, *Caretta caretta*. Bony shell, large head, reddish above.



Western pond turtle, *Clemmys marmorata*. Yellow below, uniformly gray/brown/black above, head uniformly colored.



Painted turtle, *Chrysemys picta*. Red below, shell ringed with red, head striped with yellow.

# The Washington Environment

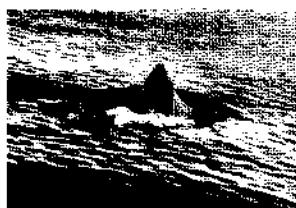
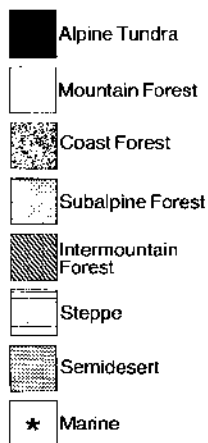
**T**he Cascade Mountains (including five major volcanic peaks, ranging from 8,400 to 14,410 feet in altitude) divide the state into two distinct climatic types. A moist, temperate

marine climate predominates west of the Cascade Crest; a dry, continental climate prevails east of the Crest.

	Region	Altitude	Annual Precipitation
	1) Olympic Mountains	5,000-8,000'	to 150"
	2) Willapa Hills	to 2,000'	55-85"
	3) Puget Sound	to 1,000'	25-55"
	4) Cascade Mountains	4,000-8,000'	to 140" (west slope)
	5) Okanogan Highlands	to 4,000' (a few 8,000')	15-25"
	6) Columbia Basin	1,000-2,000'	6-10"
	7) Blue Mountains	to 8,000'	to 30"

For purposes of observing amphibians and reptiles in the field, the state can be divided into eight habitats: The seven terrestrial habitats roughly correspond to the plant communities for which they are named. *Within these habitats are a wide variety*

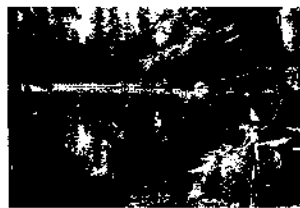
*of terrestrial and freshwater communities.* The marine habitat includes all salt waters of the state. Many habitats have been modified by agriculture and urban development. (See *Additional Information*, 2, 5, 8, 21, 22, 23.)



**A) Marine:** salt water. Leatherback turtle swimming off Oregon Coast.



**B) Coast Forest:** Douglasfir, western hemlock, maple, alder, Oregon grape, salal. (Regions 1, 2, 3, 4)



**C) Mountain forest:** Douglasfir, western hemlock, red cedar, white fir, white pine, Engelmann spruce. (Regions 1, 4, 5, 7)



**D) Subalpine forest:** Mt. hemlock, subalpine fir, yellow cedar, meadow wildflowers. (Regions 1, 4, 5, 7)



**E) Alpine tundra:** Mosses, lichens, shrubs. (Regions 1, 4)



**F) Intermountain forest:** Ponderosa pine, Douglasfir. (Regions 4, 5)



**G) Steppe:** Bluebunch wheatgrass, grasses. (Regions 5, 6, 7)



**H) Semidesert:** Sagebrush. (Regions 5, 6, 7)

# Amphibians & Reptiles

**T**hree hundred fifty million years ago, the first land vertebrates appeared on earth. They were amphibians. Reptiles appeared 50 million years later. Today, the living representatives of both groups are found on all continents except Antarctica. Reptiles are even found in some of the world's oceans, although amphibians are intolerant of salt water.

Amphibians and reptiles are vertebrates, as are fishes, birds and mammals. Both groups are ectotherms whose body temperatures fluctuate with that of their surroundings. Most amphibians have moist, granular skin, and most reptiles have a dry body covering of scales (lizards and snakes) or scutes (turtles). The majority are carnivorous as adults.

Most amphibians lay jelly-like eggs in water (a few are completely terrestrial), and their larvae lead an aquatic, fish-like existence before their metamorphosis into semi-aquatic or terrestrial adults. Amphibians breathe not only with their lungs,

but also through their moist skin; in some salamanders, lungs are reduced or absent.

Some reptiles lay shelled eggs on land; others keep the eggs inside their bodies until fully developed and then bear live young. All reptiles are lung-breathers.

Many amphibians have skin glands with toxic secretions — harmless to humans when kept out of eyes, nose and mouth — and a few reptiles are dangerously venomous (in Washington, only the rattlesnake).

(See *Additional Information*, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.)

## Additional Information

Those interested in additional information about amphibians and reptiles may want to consult the following references, which are available from bookstores, publishers, libraries or interlibrary loan:

1. Behler, J.L. & F.W. King, 1979. *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Reptiles and Amphibians*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
2. Campbell, C.D., 1962. *Introduction to Washington Geology and Resources*. Washington State Department of Conservation, Olympia.
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4. Ernst, C.H. & R.W. Barbour, 1972. *Turtles of the United States*. University Press of Kentucky, Lexington.
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12. Porter, K.R., 1972. *Herpetology*. W.B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia.
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14. Slater, J.R., 1955. *Distribution of Washington Amphibians*. Occasional Papers, College of Puget Sound, Tacoma.
15. Slater, J.R., 1963. *A Key to the Adult Reptiles of Washington State/ Distribution of Washington Reptiles*. Occasional Papers, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma.
16. Smith, H.M., 1978. *Amphibians of North America*. Golden Press, New York.
17. Smith, H.M. & E.D. Brodie Jr., 1982. *Reptiles of North America*. Golden Press, New York.
18. Stebbins, R.C., 1951. *Amphibians of Western North America*. University of California Press, Berkeley.
19. Stebbins, R.C., 1954. *Amphibians and Reptiles of Western North America*. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York.
20. Stebbins, R.C., 1966. *Fieldguide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.
21. Wolcott, E.E., 1961. *Lakes of Washington*, Volume 1 (Western Washington). Department of Conservation, Olympia.
22. Wolcott, E.E., 1964. *Lakes of Washington*, Volume 2 (Eastern Washington). Department of Conservation, Olympia.
23. Wydoski, R.S. & R.R. Whitney, 1979. *Inland Fishes of Washington*. University of Washington Press, Seattle.

## Acknowledgements:

Robert Parker Hodge (author/photographer). Photographic credits: Dave Basey (sagebrush, n. & s. alligator lizards, ringneck & sharptail snakes), Charles Lentz (w. fence & side-blotched lizards, w. skink, striped whipsnake & night snake), Charles H. Koski (swimming leatherback). Cathy Giste (illustrator).



Northwestern salamander, *Ambystoma gracile*. Uniformly gray/brown, rough areas behind eyes/on tail.



Long-toed salamander, *Ambystoma macrodactylum*. Dirty white below, brown/black above with light back stripe (breeds in still water).



Tiger salamander, *Ambystoma tigrinum*. Yellow-gray below, blotched yellow and black above.



Tiger salamander, *Ambystoma tigrinum*, larvae and neotenic larvae (sexually mature). Whitish below, blotched olive above.



Pacific giant salamander, *Dicamptodon ensatus*. Purplish-brown above with dark marbling (in/near still/flowing water).



Cope's giant salamander, *Dicamptodon copei*. Larvae, mottled brown on tan.



Olympic salamander, *Rhyacotriton olympicus*. Large eyes, small, with short tail, yellow below, brown above.



Roughskin newt, *Taricha granulosa*. Yellow/orange below, uniformly brown above, rough skin (except breeding males).



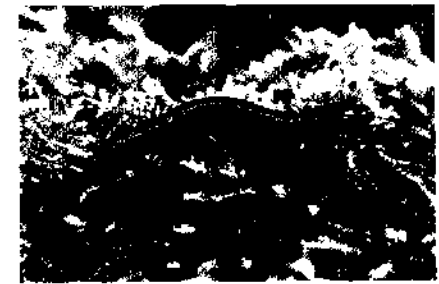
Ensatina, *Ensatina eschscholtzii*. Flesh-color below, large black eyes, reddish-brown above, constriction at base of tail.



Dunn's salamander, *Plethodon dunni*. Slate below, greenish back stripe ends before tail tip (in/near flowing water).



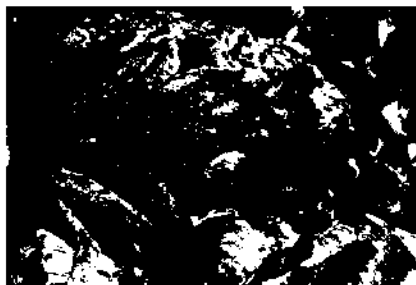
Larch Mt. salamander, *Plethodon larselli*. Reddish below, throat yellow, black above with light back stripe (talus slopes).



Van Dyke's salamander, *Plethodon vandykei*. Tan/yellow with dark sides, with/without back stripe.



Western redback salamander, *Plethodon vehiculum*. Slate below, back stripe usually red.



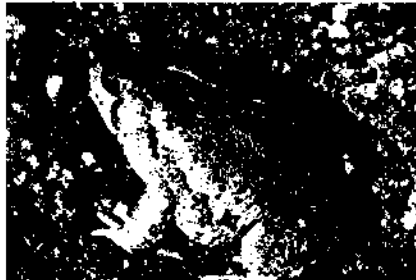
Tailed frog, *Ascaphus truei*. Olive/brown, light-colored triangular mark on top of snout, male with "tail."



Great Basin spadefoot, *Scaphiopus intermontanus*. White below, vertical eye pupil, spade on hind foot, mottled gray above.



Western toad, *Bufo boreas*. Warty, brown/green above, light back stripe.



Woodhouse's toad, *Bufo woodhousii*. Warty, back stripe, crest behind eyes.



Pacific treefrog, *Hyla regilla*. Toe pads, green/brown/tan/gray, black band on nose/eye/shoulder.



Red-legged frog, *Rana aurora*. Mottled gray below, salmon-red on underside/legs, reddish-brown above.



Cascades frog, *Rana cascadae*. Yellowish below, tan/brown above with inky black spots.



Spotted frog, *Rana pretiosa*. Reddish below, brownish above with dark blotching, eyes pointed upwards.



Northern leopard frog, *Rana pipiens*. Whitish below, green/brown above with light bordered dark spots, prominent back ridges.



Bullfrog, *Rana catesbeiana*. Large, pale yellow below, green/olive above, greenish head.



Green frog, *Rana clamitans*. Whitish below, usually green above, distinct back ridges.

SEASONAL VISIBILITY	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Easily observed in correct habitat, under favorable time, weather conditions; accidental encounters common.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Observable if actively searched for under rocks, logs, ground litter, with dip net in ponds and streams, etc.; accidental encounters common.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chance of observation or an accidental encounter unlikely.

#### HABITAT OCCURRENCE

Common	Uncommon	Rare	Not Recorded
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### HABITAT OCCURRENCE

Marine	Coast Forest	Mountain Forest	Subalpine Forest	Alpine Tundra	Intermountain Forest	Steppe	Semidesert
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#### SEASONAL VISIBILITY

Spring (MAM)	Summer (JJA)	Autumn (SON)	Winter (DJF)
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<b>AMPHIBIANS</b>								
<b>Salamanders</b>								
Northwestern salamander, <i>Ambystoma gracile</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Long-toed salamander, <i>Ambystoma macrodactylum</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tiger salamander, <i>Ambystoma tigrinum</i>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pacific giant salamander, <i>Dicamptodon ensatus</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cope's giant salamander, <i>Dicamptodon copei</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Olympic salamander, <i>Rhyacotriton olympicus</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Roughskin newt, <i>Taricha granulosa</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ensatina, <i>Ensatina eschscholtzii</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dunn's salamander, <i>Plethodon dunnii</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Larch Mountain salamander, <i>Plethodon larselli</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Van Dyke's salamander, <i>Plethodon vandykei</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Western redback salamander, <i>Plethodon vehiculum</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Frogs and toads</b>								
Tailed frog, <i>Ascaphus truei</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Great Basin spadefoot, <i>Scaphiopus intermontanus</i>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Western toad, <i>Bufo boreas</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Woodhouse's toad, <i>Bufo woodhousei</i>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pacific treefrog, <i>Hyla regilla</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Red legged frog, <i>Rana aurora</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cascades frog, <i>Rana cascadae</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Spotted frog, <i>Rana pretiosa</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Northern leopard frog, <i>Rana pipiens</i>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bullfrog, <i>Rana catesbeiana</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Green frog, <i>Rana clamitans</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>REPTILES</b>								
<b>Turtles</b>								
Western pond turtle, <i>Clemmys marmorata</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Painted turtle, <i>Chrysemys picta</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Green turtle, <i>Chelonia mydas</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Loggerhead, <i>Caretta caretta</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leatherback, <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lizards</b>								
Sagebrush lizard, <i>Sceloporus graciosus</i>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Western fence lizard, <i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Side-blotched lizard, <i>Uta stansburiana</i>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Short-horned lizard, <i>Phrynosoma douglassi</i>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Western skink, <i>Eumeces skiltonianus</i>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Northern alligator lizard, <i>Elgaria coerulea</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Southern alligator lizard, <i>Elgaria multicarinata</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Snakes</b>								
Rubber boa, <i>Charina bottae</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ringneck snake, <i>Diadophis amabilis</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sharptail snake, <i>Contia tenuis</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Racer, <i>Coluber constrictor</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Striped whipsnake, <i>Masticophis lateralis</i>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gopher snake, <i>Pituophis melanoleucus</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
California mountain king snake, <i>Lampropeltis zonata</i>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Common garter snake, <i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Western terrestrial garter snake, <i>Thamnophis elegans</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Northwestern garter snake, <i>Thamnophis ordinoides</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Night snake, <i>Hypsiglena torquata</i>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Western rattlesnake, <i>Crotalus viridis</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

# Lizards



Sagebrush lizard, *Sceloporus graciosus*. Small scales, usually striped on back, small size, male has blue belly.



Western fence lizard, *Sceloporus occidentalis*. Coarse keeled scales, blotched above, male has blue belly.



Side-blotched lizard, *Uta stansburiana*. Small keeled scales, blotch behind front legs.



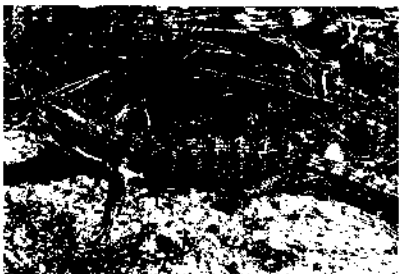
Short-horned lizard, *Phrynosoma douglassi*. Squat, flat body, small "horns" on rear of head.



Western skink, *Fumeces skiltonianus*. Smooth, rounded scales, longitudinal stripes, blue tail (dull in adults).



Northern alligator lizard, *Elgaria coerulea*. Long-bodied, lateral fold on body, short tail, keeled scales.



Southern alligator lizard, *Elgaria multicarinata*. Lateral folds on body, usually crossbands on back, longer tail.



The Washington State Game Department's Nongame Program welcomes information on amphibians and reptiles and provides, on request, cards on which observations can be recorded. For information, write: Washington State Department of Game, Nongame Program, 600 N. Capitol Way, Olympia, WA 98504.

## To identify a specimen:

- 1) Decide first if the specimen at hand is a salamander, toad, frog, turtle, lizard or snake.
- 2) Scan appropriate species photos and make tentative identification.
- 3) Verify distinguishing characteristics.
- 4) *Verify habitat occurrence.*
- 5) If necessary, repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 until you identify your specimen.

Scientific names usually are derived from Latin or Greek words. Although they may seem intimidating at first, these words become more understandable and meaningful if you look up their derivations. (See *Additional Information*, 6.)

Federal regulations protect marine turtles. State regulations protect coast forest turtles and govern the taking of bullfrogs.

(For keys and detailed species descriptions, see *Additional Information*, 1, 9, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.)

## Watch your step!

Rattlesnakes are the only dangerously venomous reptile in the state (eastern Washington and Skamania County). Chances of being bitten are remote. Heavy leather boots, loose-fitting pants and caution in placement of hands and feet among rocks, brush, fallen logs and woodpiles will reduce chances of being bitten. Do not handle live or recently killed snakes unless you can positively identify them as harmless. Know what to do in the unlikely event of rattlesnake bite. (See *Additional Information*, 7, 11, 13, 17.)

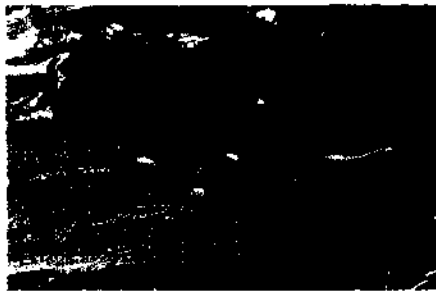




Rubber boa, *Charina bottae*. Blunt tail, smooth scales, uniformly gray/olive/brown/tan, small eyes.



Ringneck snake, *Diadophis punctatus*. Dark head, light neckstripe.



Sharptail snake, *Contia tenuis*. Tail ends in spine, reddish/pinkish/gray above.



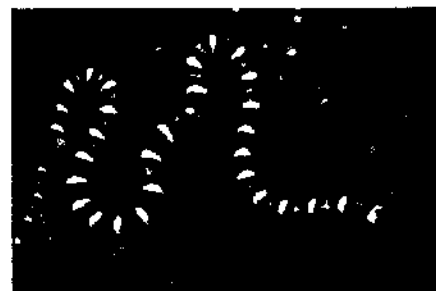
Racer, *Coluber constrictor*. Adults uniformly olive/blue above, yellowish below, large eyes. Young blotched.



Striped whipsnake, *Masticophis taeniatus*. Large head and eyes, slim body, striped.



Gopher snake, *Pituophis melanoleucus*. Strongly keeled scales, small head, dark blotches on tan/brown, round pupil (flattens head, vibrates tail and hisses loudly when disturbed).



California mountain king snake, *Lampropeltis zonata*. Red, black and white rings length of body.



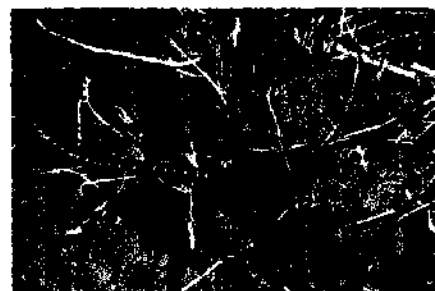
Common garter snake, *Thamnophis sirtalis*. Large, robust, often brightly colored, large eyes, usually blue below, stripes vary in intensity and color, red between scales.



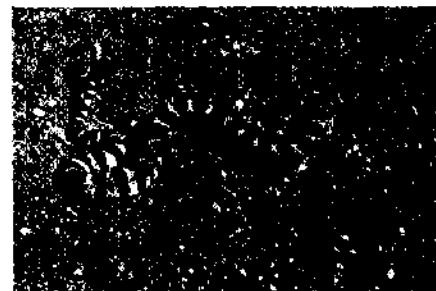
Western terrestrial garter snake, *Thamnophis elegans*. Large, robust, small eye, usually gray-brown with darker mottling/blotches between faint stripes, slate below.



Northwestern garter snake, *Thamnophis ordinoides*. Small, slender, small eye, dark above with stripes of varying color, middle stripe often red/orange.



Night snake, *Hypsiglena torquata*. Smooth scales, vertical pupil, spotted, dark blotches on neck.



Western rattlesnake, *Crotalus viridis*. Stout body, large head much wider than neck, vertical pupil, brown/olive/gray with dark blotches, rattle.